

# **MULTILATERAL CONSTRAINTS ON THE USE OF FORCE: A REASSESSMENT**

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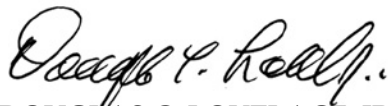
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## FOREWORD

This inquiry has been conducted in the midst of increasing questioning by policymakers and scholars concerning the importance and role of alliances and other multilateral arrangements and legal norms affecting the use of force by the United States. Provoked in part by the transatlantic altercations surrounding Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, the questioning is driven by systemic developments—changes in the structure of world politics and changes in the shape of war—of which the Iraq-focused disputes were a symptom.

Together, the systemic political and military developments portend an era of decreased U.S. deference to and reliance on established multilateral institutions (especially the United Nations [UN] and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO]), and a decreased willingness to be bound by international treaties that can constrain U.S. flexibility in the development and application of military power. Yet an emulation by other countries of this trend in U.S. policy can undermine basic U.S. interests in moderating international anarchy, arresting the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and concerting international responses to terrorism.

Although much of the controversy over the extent to which U.S. security policy ought to be constrained by multilateralism revolves around the role of the UN, the focus of this monograph is on the future of NATO. Ironically, the difficulty of achieving a multilateral consensus in the Alliance can create more of a crisis than does the difficulty of generating an effective UN response to threats to international peace and security. NATO, after all, was supposed to be America's prime multilateral institution for obtaining legitimation and support of military action when the UN Security Council was paralyzed because of the veto. But as it has turned out, especially with the enlargement of NATO's membership, the ability of Washington to obtain a Brussels imprimatur for U.S.-led multilateral military operations, let alone for its unilateral military actions, has become almost as hard as (and in some cases even harder than) obtaining UN endorsement. And whereas proposals to change the UN Security Council's voting rules have become a matter for open discourse among statespersons, such discourse with respect to the North Atlantic Council is shied away from as subversive of the ethos of the Alliance.



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## SUMMARY

### **The Need for Reassessment.**

The constraints on the use of force that the United States must accept when it participates in military operations under the aegis of an increasingly heterogeneous NATO call for a reassessment of the role that NATO plays in U.S. national security policy. This reassessment addresses the issue of whether the constraints on the U.S. use of force embodied in NATO's mode of operation are worth the benefits derived from them.

### **The Variety of Multilateral Options.**

The multilateral modalities that have evolved in NATO are only a subset of the wide range of multilateral arrangements that could be suitable for the transatlantic community. An examination of these indicates that there may be alternatives to the current design of NATO that could retain the benefits of transatlantic multilateralism, while minimizing the constraints on U.S. military flexibility and effectiveness.

### **The Benefits and Costs of Multilateralism.**

This reevaluation of NATO's evolved structure and functioning is embedded in an appreciation of the standard benefits and costs of multilateral security commitments. The benefits include international and domestic legitimacy for U.S. military actions; influence over the actions of other countries and political movements; wartime and postwar burdensharing; easier access to the battlefield; and access to more intelligence. The costs include giving others, who may not share U.S. priorities or strategic calculations, a share in political authority and/or command over U.S. military operations; delays in undertaking actions that may be time-urgent; loss of secrecy; the politicizing of intrawar strategies and the distortion of war aims; and the complication of postwar reconstruction and stabilization tasks.

## **How the Changing International System Affects the Feasibility and Desirability of Working Through NATO.**

If the international system were truly as “unipolar” as some analysts contend, members of NATO, as during the Cold War, would look to the United States as an essential provider of the world public goods of international peace and security. They therefore would be ready to cooperate in, or at least countenance, any military operation Washington decided was important (the “bandwagoning” effect), and would be unlikely to try to put barriers in its way. But such unipolarity is proving to be an illusion. Nor does the classical concept of “multipolarity” – in which other great powers coalesce to “balance” the power of the system’s hegemon – adequately comprehend what is going on.

Rather, the widespread balking at U.S. claims to automatic leadership of the transatlantic community is symptomatic of the emergence of global *polyarchy* – a system of increasingly diverse alignment and adversary relationships in which, typically, a country’s partner in one field may be its rival in another field, today’s friend may be tomorrow’s enemy, and vice versa. The opposition of France and Germany to Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and Turkey’s refusal to allow U.S. invading troops to transit its territory were consistent with the emergent polyarchy, as are the persisting efforts of European Union (EU) members of NATO to institute arrangements (e.g., the “Berlin Plus” agreements) facilitating “autonomous” military action by the Europeans in which they use some of NATO’s assets. Given this systemic reality, the United States will find it progressively less feasible and desirable to conduct major security operations under the aegis of NATO as it is currently structured and normally functions.

### **The Impact of Military Transformation.**

Much of what is included under the rubric of “transformation” – or, more ambitiously, the revolution in military affairs (RMA) – points toward a military posture that is increasingly alliance-insensitive. The contemplated transformation of U.S. capabilities and strategy is in the direction of less dependence on forward long-

term stationing of forces abroad and more on being able to get into zones of combat quickly, whether or not allies are around to support the required military operations. Coupled with the “Global Posture Review” announcements of planned realignment and redeployment of U.S. forces based overseas and the search for “a diverse array of smaller cooperative security locations for contingency access,” transformation looks more and more (from both sides of the Atlantic) like preparation for a world in which the United States will be able to apply its military power with very few allies or even without allies when necessary.

The technologies that allow for greater interoperability among the military forces of allies are also conducive to modular *separability* arrangements (as contemplated in “Berlin Plus”), such that members of a coalition physically can opt out of a NATO operation or conduct their own operation without compromising the whole NATO apparatus.

### **Toward a Modular Multilateralism.**

The systemic political developments and the innovations in military technology that are challenging the viability of NATO can be regarded either as a threat to transatlantic security or as an opportunity to adapt NATO to the changing benefits and costs of multilateralism in the polyarchic world. To retain the benefits of multilateralism while reducing the costs to U.S. military flexibility and effectiveness, the United States should:

- Recognize—in both declaratory policy and actions—that NATO has evolved into a coalition of coalitions and a much looser association of member states than originally assumed in the Washington Treaty.
- Legitimize and elaborate *modular* structures, decision processes, and operational routines.
- Promote the use of the North Atlantic Council as a consultative institution and discourage its role as director of NATO military actions.



- Prevent Council decisions that “pass the buck” to the SACEUR or subordinate NATO agencies in the form of vague mandates for conducting military operations.
- Endorse devolutions of authority and considerable operational autonomy on a case-by-case basis to modular subcoalitions that have the capability and the will to respond to particular threats to peace and security.
- Insist (and ensure through advance planning) that when the United States participates in a multilateral NATO action, the actual conduct of operations is by those modular units that can operate with sufficient unity of command and control—minus debilitating national caveats—to efficiently achieve U.S. military and political objectives.

# MULTILATERAL CONSTRAINTS ON THE USE OF FORCE: A REASSESSMENT

It's kind of like having a basketball team, and they practice and practice for six months. When it comes to game time, one or two say, "We're not going to play." Well, that's fair enough. Everyone has a free choice. But you don't have a free choice if you've practiced for all those months. So we're going to have to find a way to manage our way through that.

—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld in Nice, France,  
February 9, 2005

NATO should have a stronger relationship with the European Union. The truth is that this relationship is, at present, rather tied up in political Gordian knots.

—NATO Secretary General, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer,  
September 20, 2005

## INTRODUCTION

This is a time of fundamental questioning and debate in the transatlantic community about the functioning of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliance and other multilateral security arrangements. The controversies have included the following issues.

### **Deference to the United Nations.**

Should members of the transatlantic community, whenever time allows, always first seek United Nations (UN) Security Council authorization (or at least give it the right of "first refusal") for the use of force internationally?

### **Interpreting Article 51.**

Shall the UN proviso permitting individual or collective self-defense before the Security Council has taken measures "if an armed

attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations” be deemed to apply also to imminent attacks – thus allowing preemption? Shall Article 51 be interpreted as prohibiting preventive or humanitarian military operations not authorized by the Security Council, or as simply not covering such operations in the absence of Security Council authorization?

### **The Role of NATO.**

Should members of NATO, if the Security Council has refused authorization or is deliberating too slowly, then always seek authorization (if time allows) from the NATO Council for the use of force internationally? What obligations should be put on European members (or the European Union [EU] when acting collectively) to give NATO rather than the EU the “second refusal” rights? What role and procedures should NATO adopt for cases in which non-NATO members of the transatlantic community would be crucially helped by NATO’s legitimation of their resort to force and tangible assistance?

### **Coalitions within NATO.**

When the transatlantic community and/or NATO is unable to forge a consensus sought by some members to authorize the use of force, what should be the relationship between the organization as a whole and the coalition within it seeking legitimation of its planned military operations? What less-than-consensus voting arrangements and procedures can be devised to allow a substantial group of members—say the EU, or a U.S.-led “coalition of the willing” who feel impelled to use force—to employ some of NATO’s assets, particularly its communications and warning systems?

### **NATO’s Decisionmaking Processes.**

What discretion should the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) have over conduct-of-war decisions? How much should he be constrained by the North Atlantic Council (NAC) and by the

National Military Authorities? How much should the Council and/or SACEUR defer to the recommendations of the multinational Defense Planning Committee? Should all significant escalation decisions (e.g., employing a new category of weapon; bringing an additional class of targets under attack; significantly augmenting troop strength; and cease-fires) be referred back to the Council for prior authorization?

### **The Authority of Sub-coalition and National Military Commanders.**

How much autonomy of command and control should be retained by sub-coalition commanders (e.g., the U.S.-led operation in Kosovo and the EU military operation in Bosnia) and national commanders? What are the consequences of maintaining effective transatlantic coordination of military operations, let alone disciplined command and control of multinational forces, if other members of NATO emulate the standing U.S. policy, promulgated in Presidential Decision Directive 25 (May 1994): "The President retains and will never relinquish command authority over U.S. forces?"

The controversies have been driven by changes in the structure of world politics and changes in the shape of war, and the interaction between these two domains of the global system. The political changes are producing a "polyarchic" system of fickle alliances and loose security communities in which allies or supporters on one issue can be adversaries on other issues, and today's friend may be tomorrow's enemy. The military innovations are reducing the requirements for foreign bases and force prepositioning, and in some cases are leading national security officials to view multilateral military arrangements as strategic and tactical liabilities.

In addressing the resulting predicaments posed for basic U.S. national security policy, this monograph focuses primarily on the multilateral institutions and norms in the transatlantic community that deal with the use of force. The analysis is not simply of what has been happening in and to these multilateral institutions and norms. It is equally an exploration of ways the United States can participate in and help shape the multilateral institutions and norms of the transatlantic community so as to preserve their contributions to U.S.

and international security while avoiding excessive constraints on U.S. military flexibility.

## **MULTILATERALISM: ITS SCOPE AND VARIETY**

Multilateralism, as commonly understood among scholars and practitioners in the field of international security, denotes an official government-to-government relationship among a group of countries (three or more) in which the members of the multicountry group are accountable to one another for their actions in the domain that is the particular concern of the group.<sup>1</sup> U.S. foreign policy will always comprise a mix of multilateralism, bilateralism, and unilateralism.<sup>2</sup> Yet a foreign policy broadly committed to advance and sustain multilateral process and institutions can be expected to impact on U.S. grand strategy, military plans and operations, and coercive diplomacy quite differently than a foreign policy determined to maximize U.S. flexibility and freedom of action, particularly in the use of force.

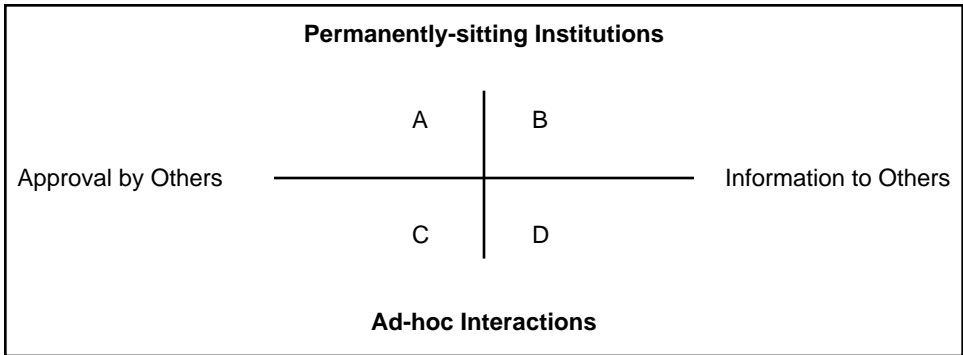
An assessment of the advantages and disadvantages to the United States of a foreign policy substantially constrained by multilateral accountability in the use of military force must start with an appreciation of the different kinds of international accountability arrangements available in the international security field. The benefits and costs of multilateralism will, of course, vary with different kinds of accountability and for different types of military operations.

The domain of concern that prompts commitments of mutual accountability may be a singular issue involving all members of the group, as in the Missile Technology Control Regime. The instruments of accountability may be highly specialized as in the Chemical Weapons Convention. There may be a complex set of issues around which the members of the multilateral group all gravitate and which stimulates them to define the group as a community—for example, the North Atlantic Community. The domain of concern that is the group's reason for existence, as in the case of the so-called World Community comprised of the members of the UN, may be as all-encompassing and amorphous as "international peace and security."

The multilateral processes and institutions to which the United States subscribes (or that are available to the United States to participate in or join) and their potential for constraining their members' unilateral action can be arrayed along two intersecting dimensions: One is the *extent-of-institutionalization* spectrum, ranging from ad hoc interactions when information and/or threats are exchanged and behavioral adjustments are negotiated or refused, to permanently-sitting decisionmaking institutions. The other is the *extent-of-accountability* spectrum, ranging from promises to keep the other participants in a multilateral arrangement informed of what the United States is doing (or will be doing) in a particular domain of behavior, to binding commitments not to act in that domain without approval from the other participants.<sup>3</sup>

These two intersecting dimensions of multilateralism can be represented, as in the figure below, as establishing four quadrants: A, B, C, and D – with A involving arrangements with the most constraints on U.S. freedom of action, and D involving the least constraints. In which quadrant a particular kind of multilateral arrangement falls will often be conjectural and debatable. The locations of some are obvious, while others are not placed that clearly. The purpose of arraying and representing them in this way is only to keep before us the realization that multilateral obligations and constraints come in many sizes and shapes, and any statements about the benefits and costs *it* (multilateralism) has for the U.S. military and diplomatic effectiveness require substantial and specific situational analysis.

*Quadrant A* includes the permanently seated “collective security” institutions: the UN and NATO—both of which legally bind their members to adhere to the decisions of their highest political bodies: the UN Security Council and the NAC, both of which have permanent secretariats authorized to implement such decisions. But neither institution is in the upper-left (truly *supranational*) corner of *Quadrant A*. Under the UN Charter, the United States, like the four other permanent members of the Security Council, legally can protect its freedom of action by exercising its veto or by exercising its Article 51 right to engage in self-defense (with or without allies) when the Security Council is unable to act in a timely manner. Similarly, although the NATO Treaty obligates all members to consult together



**Figure 1. Kinds of Multilateral Constraint.**

whenever any one of them considers its territorial integrity, political independence, or security to be threatened (Article 4) and to regard an armed attack against one or more of them to be an attack against them all and accordingly to come to the assistance of the country or countries being attacked (Article 5), the United States and other members retain the functional equivalent of a veto by the sacrosanct tradition of making NAC decisions by consensus. Moreover, the NATO treaty, like the UN Charter, leaves it to the members (in the absence of firm and detailed direction from the NAC and its subordinate bodies) to implement their Article 5 obligation individually or in concert with other countries. Thus when the NAC, having for the first time invoked Article 5 in reaction to 9/11, subsequently failed to fall in line behind all of Washington's counterterrorism strategies, the George W. Bush administration felt no need to be constrained by NATO and no legal inhibitions to constructing a "coalition of the willing" outside of NATO for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM.<sup>4</sup>

Another permanently-sitting institution to which members have ceded a good deal of authority is the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in its role of principal negotiator and verifier of countries' obligations under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). Yet, when the IAEA fails to issue a factual or legal finding the United States wants—as in the months prior to Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, when the Bush administration sought a definitive endorsement of its own claims that Saddam's regime was reconstituting its nuclear weapons program—Washington has felt

unconstrained to make its own findings and even to denigrate the competence of the IAEA.

The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, created by the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), to which the United States and over 170 countries are parties, is also in *Quadrant A*. Article 9 of the CWC accords this implementing organization the authority to order and have its technical secretariat carry out challenge inspections on the territory of a party that any other party has requested to verify compliance. However, most of the multilateral arms control treaties and confidence and security building measures that the United States is (or could someday be) party to fall in the upper right corner of *Quadrant C*. They often require that the United States participate in a regime of international verification, but any such verification arrangements must in each instance be agreed to by the United States. Moreover, the United States retains the right, usually stipulated in the text of the treaty or agreement, to withdraw from the arrangement within a specified timeframe after having given notice to its treaty or agreement partners.

Some permanent institutions, on the model of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) or the Organization of American States (OAS), while operating with secretariats, are situated in *Quadrant B* since they are primarily consultative. The OSCE performs important conflict mediation services, but the United States is not bound by the outcomes.

Many of the postwar/postconflict peacekeeping and reconstruction and stabilization efforts the United States is temporarily involved in—e.g., Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, Iraq, Haiti—are located at the juncture between *Quadrants A, B, and C*. Characteristically, they involve substantial and very difficult coordination and cooperation between the United States and the countries with whom the United States is sharing such responsibilities, with the often-flimsy host-country regimes, as well as with the international agencies—whether UN or NATO, the African Union, the OAS, or other regional auspices that may be devised. Where arrangements include the deployment of U.S. military units and where operational necessities may require the temporary placement of U.S. forces under the authority of a foreign commander, the basic provision in Presidential Decision Directive 25 for such circumstances is



supposed to apply: namely, that the “U.S. reserves the right to terminate participation at any time and to take whatever actions it deems necessary to protect U.S. forces if they are endangered.”<sup>5</sup>

*Quadrant D* arrangements are those requiring a minimal extent of institutionalization and little, if any, ceding of authority to the entire partnership of the multilateral arrangement. Examples are the “coalition of the willing” that the Bush administration put together for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, the U.S.-run Proliferation Security Initiative for interdicting the shipment of WMD-related materials, and the six-power negotiating forum (comprising the United States, China, Russia, Japan, North Korea, and South Korea) for dealing with North Korea’s nuclear program.

## **THE BENEFITS AND COSTS OF MULTILATERALISM**

Although there is a wide range of multilateral security arrangements in which the United States participates, a general outline of the kinds of benefits and costs that are usually expected to flow from acting multilaterally can provide a basis for analyzing the evolving pattern and problems of multilateralism in the transatlantic community. The generally expected benefits and costs of multilateralism also can provide broad benchmarks for evaluating suggestions for designing multilateralist approaches that will best serve U.S. interests.

### **Benefits Sought from Multilateral Commitments.**

#### *1. Legitimacy.*

Multilateral direction, authorization, or approval of the use of force by the United States abroad confers a degree of legitimacy to military operations, without which it is considerably more difficult to generate the congressional and popular support required to provision and sustain them. Whether or not the term legitimacy itself is used in the official or popular discourse, decisions to go to war or to dramatically escalate an on-going war almost always are shaped in part by views, domestic and foreign, as to whether the contemplated actions are legal and moral. Legal is taken to mean consistent with the U.S. Constitution and congressional legislation, but also with

treaties to which the United States is a party. “Moral” tends to be defined in the policy community as consistent with prevailing views in the nation — *and* on the part of friendly and respected allies — about when and for what purposes war is justified and about whether certain weapons and targets and levels of destruction should be prohibited: what the “just war” theorists call *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* considerations. When the populace and policy-community is highly uncertain or divided over the legal and moral legitimacy of a contemplated use of force, judgments rendered in the relevant multinational arenas can often tip the domestic debate one way or another.

From the Truman administration’s determination to obtain UN authorization in 1950 for going to war in Korea (which it was able to do under the UN flag), to the Kennedy administration’s effort in 1962 to get the UN Security Council to brand the Soviet missile deployments in Cuba as a threat to international peace and security, to the Bush administration’s diplomatic success in 1990 in obtaining a Security Council mandate to oust Iraq from Kuwait by whatever means necessary, to the Clinton administration’s conduct of the war in Kosovo as a NATO operation, to the failed efforts of the Bush administration in 2002 and early 2003 to obtain either UN or NATO backing for the regime-change preventive war against Iraq, to its more successful effort to garner international support for and participation in the reconstruction and internal pacification of Iraq, U.S. Presidents and most of their high-ranking foreign policy advisers have appreciated the multilateralism-confers-legitimacy dynamic.

The high-level appreciation of how multilateralism can tip the foreign policy debate is validated by public opinion research showing that when a U.S. military action has multilateral blessing, and, better yet, participation, popular support almost always is enhanced. A careful and comprehensive study by Richard Eichenberg of opinion surveys from 1981 to 2005 concludes that “multilateral sentiment does matter.” In numerous episodes (Lebanon peacekeeping, Bosnia, Kosovo, and the confrontation with North Korea over nuclear weapons), his analysis of polling data shows support for using U.S. military force is at least 10 percentage points higher when the question mentions UN or NATO participation.<sup>6</sup>

Clearly, the use of force is likely to receive greater public support if it can be packaged as a multilateral operation. But while seeking the added legitimation that multilateralism can confer, all U.S. administrations have been careful to preserve this nation's ultimate prerogative of making its own determinations of when and where U.S. force is warranted, and of what rules of engagement should constrain the U.S. military operations. Thus, even in the Clinton administration, for whom multilateralism was perhaps their proudest emblem, it was prudentially and explicitly circumscribed: "The decision whether to use force is dictated first and foremost by our national interests," said the NSC's 1999 report to Congress, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, issued under the President's name. "In those specific areas where our vital interests are at stake, our use of force will be decisive and, if necessary, unilateral."<sup>7</sup>

## *2. Influence Over Others.*

The more deeply-cutting the multilateral oversight and direction of military operations, the less likely it is that allies will act on their own contrary to U.S. interests or strategic preferences. This was the main reason for U.S. insistences during the Cold War for rigidly-centralized NATO command and control under the Supreme Allied Commander Europe – always an American – of all of NATO's short-range and battlefield nuclear weapons. Even if during a rapidly escalating battle SACEUR ordered the release of battlefield nuclear weapons to national units, these national units actually could not use the nuclear ordnance unless subsequently ordered by SACEUR. As the technology matured, these controls were reinforced by an electronically activated permissive action link (PAL) system. The deep multilateral NATO-centered command and control procedures for any combat operations by any NATO member in Europe was also the institutional design for assuring Britain, France, and other allies that a rearmed Germany would be subordinated into a supranational command apparatus. Now, with the disappearance of credible nuclear escalation threats, the Europeans are agitating to do away with such NATO-centered (insofar as that means U.S.-directed) constraints on their security policies.

Meanwhile, the United States, recalling the insufficiently vigorous reactions by some European country peacekeeping units against harassment in Bosnia and the intra-alliance disputes over bombing targets in Kosovo,<sup>8</sup> has developed its own worries about the constraining effects of NATO-run military operations.

### *3. Burden Sharing.*

When U.S. military operations are conducted on the basis of multilateral authorization, the members of the authorizing agency or endorsing group can be tapped for contributions—financial, material, troops—to the operation. Financial contributions extracted from coalition partners were especially helpful to the United States in the Gulf War (1991), in contrast to the paucity of contributions to help defray the costs of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, undertaken with endorsement from a very narrow coalition. Recent moves to multilateralize reconstruction and stability missions in Afghanistan and Iraq, motivated largely by burden sharing hopes, are beginning to produce limited returns.

### *4. Access to the Battlefield.*

Particularly when planned military operations include the use of foreign bases, navigation through the territorial waters of other countries, or overflying their territory, treating those who possess these facilitating assets as part of America's decision family can be crucial to the effective achievement of one's objectives. The lack of adequate consultation in NATO by the Reagan administration prior to Operation EL DORADO CANYON involving U.S. air strikes against some of some of Libya's military facilities and Muammar Qaddafi's personal compound, required a more cumbersome launch of the operation from Britain rather than from air bases in Germany and Italy, a longer and more detectable access path that could have compromised the surprise factor. In Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, the inability of U.S. forces to invade Iraq through Turkish territory (it was not a NATO operation, which would have involved Turkey; nor did Turkey, because of its domestic politics, have any intention of becoming involved) proved very costly.

## 5. *Access to More Intelligence.*

A vital component of U.S. counterterror operations around the world, access to the intelligence on terrorist networks, cells, and individuals demands, at a minimum, close consultation with numerous national governments. Many of the new forms of technologically acquired intelligence as well as old-fashioned spy-acquired intelligence require active cooperation with foreign intelligence agencies, who as a matter of course expect reciprocal attention to their wants. This has become of special importance also in efforts to prevent the transnational transfer of fissile material and other components of nuclear weapons. The current re-embrace by the U.S. government of proactive multilateralism by an administration that earlier denigrated it has much to do with these intelligence benefits.

### **Likely and Possible Costs of Multilateralism.**

#### *1. Shared Authority with Those Who May Not Share One's Priorities.*

This problem, which has severely curtailed the willingness of the United States to pursue its international security objectives under the aegis of the UN Security Council,<sup>9</sup> now arises (more than it did during the Cold War) also with respect to NATO. The removal of the common threat to NATO members from the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the emergence of divergent national and subcoalition interests among the widely-enlarged membership (turning the organization into a quasi United Nations for the transatlantic region) increases the costs and risks of running a NATO military operation. The need to expend political capital in order to obtain the necessary Council consensus; the pressures to compromise and accept lowest-common-denominator and/or vague mandates to operational commanders; the likelihood that such mandates will be burdened by numerous national caveats that can inhibit unity of command and restrict tactical military flexibility—all of these inherent costly features of working through NATO have led U.S. policymakers to seek out smaller coalitions or to act unilaterally when engaging in major military action such as the Gulf War, Afghanistan, and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. And

the probable costs are likely to increase as NATO further enlarges its membership.

### *2. Inhibition of Timely and Efficient Action.*

Merely fulfilling an obligation to give a multilateral organization the right of “first refusal” before seeking out a smaller coalition or acting unilaterally can be costly if the process of multilateral deliberation slows down the deployment of military forces into a rapidly progressing conflict. If the multilateral organization after due deliberation finally refuses to authorize or conduct the intervention, both legitimacy and efficiency suffer. Even if the multilateral imprimatur ultimately is obtained, postponing the intervention may mean a much larger and costly operation has to be mounted in order to counter gains effectively that the adversary meanwhile has achieved. Indeed, such mounting costs of delay finally may reduce the willingness to mount a military action even on the part of those who earlier were ready to intervene. This can be a serious problem in humanitarian crises as, for example, where intercommunal conflict is escalating into “ethnic cleansing” on the way to genocide.

Similarly, intrawar tactical or strategic operations can be slowed down dangerously or avoided, even when they would be highly effective and not at all inconsistent with a mission’s mandate, simply because of the need to “kick upstairs” (to multilateral political levels) requests for fresh authorization.

### *3. Loss of secrecy (and the Effectiveness That Comes with Surprise).*

The greater the number of countries involved, obviously the greater the risk of loss of secrecy. This is more than the issue of enlarged opportunities for espionage, which the information technology of fencing off communications through encryption and other devices can help counter. It is also a question of the political willingness of the parent multilateral organization to delegate sufficient military discretion to the operational commanders over multinational fighting units for devising and directing surprise and deceptive actions that need to be held very tightly in order to succeed.

#### 4. *Politicizing of Intra-war Strategies and Distortion of War Aims.*

Throughout history politico-military coalitions have been bedeviled by the difficulties in preventing political differences among allies from distorting military imperatives. This was a problem even between the closest of allies in World War II, the British and Americans – most prominently over the location and timing of the opening of a second front, but also over the final drives into Germany and Czechoslovakia. President Roosevelt and General Eisenhower wanted to defeat Hitler's *Wehrmacht* as decisively and rapidly as possible, and without exacerbating Stalin's suspicions, whereas Prime Minister Churchill and his generals also were focused on how the location of one's forces at war's end would strongly condition the postwar bargaining over spheres of influence. The politics of keeping coalition partners happy can also affect the timing and terms of war termination, as happened in the decision to call a cease-fire in the Gulf War after throwing Saddam's forces out of Kuwait and not to push on to Baghdad. There is no reason to expect that NATO operations, especially given the Kosovo experience, can be insulated against the intrusion of political controversies on military strategy and tactics. And as will be discussed later, the Alliance's proudest poster unit, the National Reaction Force, is ready made for such contamination.

#### 5. *Complication of Postwar Reconstruction and Stabilization Efforts.*

While one of the benefits of multilateral arrangements for deciding on or supporting war is the increased likelihood of burden sharing in the aftermath, coalition partners also will want to make sure that postwar conditions correspond to the reasons they supported or joined in the fighting. Thus, even as, at the time of this writing, the United States is anxious to transfer most of the reconstruction and stabilization tasks in Afghanistan to NATO, considerable differences are emerging between the United States and the Europeans as to the degree to which, and how, NATO should take over or share in the counterinsurgency operations still being conducted by the United States.

## MULTILATERALISM IN THE POST-UNIPOLAR WORLD: THE IMPACT OF POLYARCHY

An evaluation of multilateral constraints on the use of military force by the United States requires an understanding of the global political structure in which these constraints are supposed to operate. If the United States is presiding over a basically unipolar world, multilateralism will take different shapes and have different implications for U.S. security than if multilateralism is operating in a multipolar or “polyarchic” world.

In a unipolar world dominated by the United States, multilateral arrangements to which the United States is a party are likely to function more as instruments for ensuring that others conform to U.S. policy preferences and share the burdens with the United States of providing global public goods (international peace and security, a well-functioning world economy, conservation of the planet’s natural resources, and protection of essential ecosystems). In a multipolar world, multilateral arrangements—whether institutionalized or established ad hoc—are supposed to perform the crucial function of moderating balance-of-power rivalries among regional hegemony, who, within their regional spheres of influence, may be the leading provisioners of international public goods. Also, in a multipolar world that is relatively peaceful, inter-regional regimes may be relied on for coordinating activities and allocating prerogatives in adjacent commons areas (such as rivers, coastal fisheries, international straits, and air space), and facilitating international commerce. In the highly diverse and often chaotic *polyarchic* world—to be described below—multilateral arrangements, especially in the peace and security field, are crucial for the minimum world order the United States needs for its own security and well-being. Yet many of these arrangements are becoming extraordinarily difficult to construct and sustain in the configurations that would be feasible in the unipolar or multipolar worlds.

### **The Unipolar Illusion.**

The fashionable idea that the post-Cold War world is unipolar oversimplifies today’s complex realities. True, the United States is



the world's only remaining superpower. But this *super* power does not simply translate into *polar* power, in the sense of the impact exerted by Washington during Cold War.

The bipolarity of the Cold War system inhered not just in the existence of two countries more powerful than any of the rest, but also in the massive gravitational pull (geostrategic and ideological) by each superpower on others. Each superpower's influence over the international behavior of its allies and clients was so great that it was appropriate to regard the whole system, except for the determinedly nonaligned countries,<sup>10</sup> as in a condition of two-sided polarization.<sup>11</sup>

Seeing one of the two power-centers of the bipolar system collapse in the early 1990s, its sphere of control disintegrate, particularly in Eastern Europe, and its satraps around the world left without a big-brother military ally and economic patron, many analysts, policymakers, and pundits deduced that the system that remained was *unipolar*.<sup>12</sup> By the standard (material) measures of power, this should still be the case. On the eve of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, with a defense budget greater than the combined military budgets of the next 15 countries, The United States maintained over 6,000 nuclear warheads in its strategic nuclear arsenal, the strongest and most technologically-sophisticated conventional forces in the world, and military deployments in over 100 countries.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, in 2005, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the United States—running at more than \$10 trillion—is over 20 percent of the world's entire GDP.

How much effective influence over others does the great differential in material power confer? The United States, to be sure, is still the most influential single actor, and its cooperation or opposition often can determine the fate of policies and programs of others around the world. But being the only superpower is not the same as having usable power over most others in the system. Some forms of power—military, economic, ideational, or the power that comes from diplomatic/political skill—may be more or less usable vis-à-vis some actors in the system than others. These various types of power often are neither fungible nor fully additive into a kind of Gross National Power that when posed against the power of another state will overcome its resistance, like a magnet pulling on a piece of metal.

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States often has not been able to obtain the cooperation it seeks from other nations, even when applying its putative hegemonic weight—benignly through providing economic, security, and prestige benefits to those who cooperate, or coercively through applying punitive economic or political sanctions, or wielding military power. Except in certain specifically-defined post-September 11, 2001 (9/11), counterterrorism projects, not very many countries have been all that ready to coalesce under the U.S. banner—the “bandwagoning” response to a hegemon’s exertions of power. Rather, as became dramatically and painfully evident in the U.S. failure to gain UN Security Council backing for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, many influential actors in the international community, including countries the United States used to count as loyal allies, are resisting being pushed around or bought off when their interests, values, or grand strategies diverge from those of the hegemon.<sup>14</sup>

### **The Inadequacy of the Great-Power Multipolarity Model.**

If this is not a unipolar world—one in which the United States, like an omnipotent regent, dispenses rewards and threatens sanctions, successfully maintaining order among its otherwise unruly wards—what about a multipolar world, a system of great-power alignments, power balancing, and concerts?<sup>15</sup> Perhaps there can yet be a multipolar dynamic among the great powers, analogous to the multipolar systems of the past, in which the power game played by the major states (possibly five, but as many as a dozen) was the key to international stability or a breakdown of world order and peace.<sup>16</sup>

The emergent 21st century geopolitical reality, however, looks quite different from traditional multipolarity. Only two contemporary “great powers” are potential sources of serious threats to international peace and security in the near future: China, if it resorts to military means to take over Taiwan or becomes too aggressive in prosecuting its claims in the South China and East China Seas; and possibly a dissatisfied Russia that attempts to reassert control over former Soviet-controlled areas.<sup>17</sup> Japan, in the more distant future (more than 5 years out), if it converts its hefty “self-defense” forces into an all-purpose military, and particularly if it develops its own nuclear

arsenal, could come into military confrontation with Russia or China in ways that threaten overall peace and security.<sup>18</sup> The EU, if and when it becomes more consolidated, could intensify progressively both its economic and diplomatic rivalry with the United States. Yet such economic and political conflicts as do emerge between the EU and the United States are highly unlikely to escalate to the level of threats of force, let alone war, unless preceded by some fundamental discontinuities in domestic and world politics.

The sources of internationally destabilizing actions are more likely to be middle powers such as Iraq and Iran (again seeking to exert regional hegemony, with or without nuclear weapons), or nuclear armed India and Pakistan in a new war over Kashmir, or Israel and its neighbors—particularly if their conflicts interfere with the industrial states' access to important economic resources or geostrategic locations. The greatest worry vis-à-vis North Korea may be an implosion of its governing regime resulting from an inability to satisfy the basic needs of its people, in which case both its international marketing of nuclear weapons components and its temptation to raise diversionary tensions with South Korea or Japan are potential serious threats to international peace and security. Failed or failing states—like Zimbabwe or Bangladesh, or Afghanistan (if current stabilization efforts collapse), or even Kosovo after the departure of NATO security forces—could catalyze dangerous regional instabilities. Moreover, the entire system can be destabilized, and wars initiated and conducted by nongovernment actors: violent political movements, terrorist networks, and criminal syndicates.

In the system maturing before us, the precipitating events more than ever (except perhaps in medieval Europe) also are likely to come in a variety of forms besides the movement of military forces across borders: terrorism, subnational and transnational ethnic wars, failed domestic political systems, collapsing economies, contraband in weapons and drugs, and ecological disasters.<sup>19</sup> Rivalries or concerted action among the great powers might be important in exploiting or countering various of these threats to international peace and security, but more often than not, the sources of war and peace will lie elsewhere than in the great-power competition.

In short, in contrast to the great-power multipolar systems of the past, there are now a much larger number and variety of actors, states, and nonstate actors, who can shake up the system. The major threats to system equilibrium are not primarily territorial expansion, tipping the balance of power through the addition or subtraction of allies, or dramatic augmentation of one or another of the great powers' military capabilities. Opposition to a great power's policies that one does not like will rarely take the form of power balancing through the formation or tightening of countervailing alliances. More likely, opposition will come as irritating, even defiant, acts of noncooperation – what I call *balking* – such as the refusal of France, Russia, and China to vote with the United States on important Iraq resolutions before the Security Council, or the refusal of Turkey to allow its territory to be used as a base for the invasion of Iraq.

### **The Emergent Polyarchy.<sup>20</sup>**

The structure of world politics that has evolved since the end of the Cold War still features the global hegemony of the United States (not unipolarity) but, increasingly, within a *polyarchic* field of actors – nation-states, terrorist networks, subnational groups, transnational religions, multinational enterprises, and global and regional institutions. These communities and organizations are often in intense competition for resources and the support and loyalty of their constituents, many of whom are members of various of the competing entities at the same time. Hardly any countries or political movements are aligned unidirectionally in their major international relationships, either with one another or with the United States. The cross-pressures to which countries are subject in the polyarchic system make for fickle cooperative and adversary relationships, in which today's ally may be tomorrow's enemy, depending on the issue at hand.

The fact that many NATO countries and members of the previous Gulf War coalition were at odds with the United States over how to deal with Saddam Hussein in 2002-03 was less an anomaly than an expression of the emergent polyarchic realities. Unlike the Cold War system (or its hypothetical multipolar or unipolar successors) which assumed a high degree of congruence between primary security

communities, trading blocs, and ideological coalitions, world society today features a good deal of incongruence—not as an aberration, but as a systemic characteristic. Trading partners, such as Canada and the United States, may be adversaries on military and arms control issues (e.g., national missile defense, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and the ban on land mines) and on how to deal with difficult countries within the Hemisphere, such as Cuba or Venezuela. Cultural/ideological allies, such as Sweden and Finland, may be in serious dispute over navigational and fishing rights. Countries engaged in joint military technology projects (Russia and the former Soviet states in Central Asia, for example) may have major differences over fighting terrorism or combating contraband drugs. Allies on global environmental issues (say, India and Malaysia in their opposition to international controls on cutting down forests) are frequently at odds on questions of human rights or humanitarian intervention. Moreover, such cross-pressures often are rooted in a stratum of complex relationships at the substate level, wherein some sectors in a country want to retain and institutionalize cooperative interaction with particular sectors in countries toward which other sectors are hostile—a characteristic feature of the U.S.-British-French-German relationships, of relationships among the EU countries themselves, and increasingly between the Japanese and the Chinese.<sup>21</sup>

Accordingly, it is becoming difficult to form and sustain reliable alliance commitments and collective security arrangements for dealing with potential threats from one's adversaries. Individual nations must prepare to fend for themselves—or opportunistically seek allies of convenience ad hoc for prosecuting the conflict at hand (as the United States did in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM)—in the process of loosening the constraints on unilateral action supposed to prevail in multilateral security communities. The world might seem to be reverting back to the traditional self-help system of determinedly sovereign nation-states. But the “anarchy” of the traditional system was, by comparison, quite stable. National leaders could by and large control what went on within their jurisdictions and could quite reliably commit their countries to alliances in order to counter the power of their aggressive adversaries. In the polyarchic world, there are many more “loose cannons” (literally and figuratively) capable on their own of generating havoc in the

system, destabilizing governments as well as international peace and security arrangements—not only Osama bin Laden, but transnational entrepreneurs and pirates of weapons and high-tech knowledge, and even respectable multinational corporations with a vested interest in who runs the government in countries where they have subsidiaries.

Yet polyarchy is not without conflict-moderating features. The dense transnational networks of interdependence and multiple and diverse relationships of groups and countries in at least the industrialized regions mean that international adversaries are likely to have economic partners and/or ethnic “brothers” and “sisters” in the population of societies against which they are in conflict. These crosscutting attachments can work as a break on efforts to generate the total nation-to-nation hostility required to mobilize domestic support for war. But these same characteristics mitigate against the durable and credible international alliance commitments and effective action by global or regional collective security organizations to deter war, let alone to conduct it.

### ***“Berlin Plus” Plus.***

The rifts that have become commonplace among members of NATO over when to go to war and rules of engagement can be seen as a natural expression of the emergent polyarchy. Exhibit A, because of its implications for the kind of multilateralism that is the focus of this monograph, is the maturation of the EU’s determination to develop European security and defense policies and capabilities distinct from NATO’s. When it became evident that the Europeans were determined to build some form of common European defense entity, the United States decided to accommodate to the new reality and support recognition by NATO, formalized by the foreign and defense minister meetings in Berlin and Brussels in June 1966, of a European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) *within* the organization. The NATO Council also decided, however, in an ambiguous and open-ended formulation that would subsequently generate intense controversy, that NATO assets were to be made available for crisis management operations led by the Western EU.

The internal NATO imbroglio over unresolved questions about the transferable assets in so-called Berlin Plus agreements—what were they exactly? What European entity would receive them? Under what circumstances? For precisely what purposes and under what rules and command arrangements?—was sparked in December 1998 by the joint statement issued by President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Tony Blair at the conclusion of their summit meeting in Saint-Malo, France. The Franco-British declaration raised hackles in Washington both for what it said and what it did not say about the ESDI. The startling words were that “the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action.” *Autonomous* action did not sound particularly consistent with the basic Berlin-Plus stipulation that the ESDI would always operate within the NATO framework and could use temporarily “separable but not separate” NATO assets. And there was nothing in the Chirac-Blair statement to counter explicitly the implication that “autonomous” action could encompass European go-it-alone military initiatives (or defections from U.S.-sponsored NATO policies) subversive of the very ethos of the transatlantic Alliance.<sup>22</sup>

Four days after the Chirac-Blair demarche, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, addressing the NATO foreign ministers meeting in Brussels, voiced the U.S. concerns. Any such initiative, she insisted, “must avoid preempting Alliance decisionmaking by *de-linking* ESDI from NATO, avoid *duplicating* existing efforts, and avoid *discriminating* against non-EU members.”<sup>23</sup> Underlying these “three Ds,” as they came to be called, was what the U.S. Ambassador to NATO coined the “fourth D”: the long-standing anxiety that there could be an even more basic *decoupling* of Europe and America, in which each would go its own way in defining threats that warranted going to war and in designing and carrying out its own grand strategy.<sup>24</sup>

The essentials in the *St. Malo vs. four Ds* debate of 1998 set the parameters of the Euro-American dialog/confrontation that was exposed dramatically in the UN Security Council debates leading up to Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, and that has continued, albeit not as loudly, in Brussels. There have been imaginative efforts on both sides and in Brussels to bridge the divide, especially in the wake of 9-11. The most impressive product of this conflict-resolution

diplomacy is the so-called “Framework Agreement” in an exchange of letters between the EU Secretary General/High Representative and the NATO Secretary General dated March 17, 2003, reaffirming and elaborating upon “Berlin Plus” assurances that the EU could access NATO assets for EU-led military operations (called “crisis management operations”).

The major elements of the “Framework” (which persists as the basis for continuing NATO-EU cooperation) include:

- assurances of EU access to NATO capabilities and common assets such as communication units and headquarters for EU-led crisis management operations;
- assurances of EU access to NATO’s planning capabilities for EU-led crisis management operations;
- procedures for release, monitoring, return, and recall of such assets and capabilities;
- terms of reference for NATO’s Deputy SACEUR—who in principle will be the commander of any EU-led military operation under the “Berlin Plus” arrangements; and,
- NATO-EU consultation arrangements for any such operations.<sup>25</sup>

This framework for implementing “Berlin Plus” would, of course, require further situation-by-situation implementing arrangements, which, predictably, would be bedeviled by the details. The on-going consultations for EU’s role in Bosnia and Kosovo are cases in point.

### **Prognosis.**

The Euro-American divisions over NATO strategies and arrangements, and also the divisions *within* the EU over the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP), are of a structural kind, emanating from the complex fault-lines and cross-pressures of the emergent polyarchy. These fault-lines and cross-pressures should be regarded as expressions of entirely natural differences in national interest among members of the transatlantic community—reflected in a myriad of divergent policies toward, for example, the Israel-Palestine problem, the Iranian and North Korean nuclear programs, Kurdish independence aspirations, the Russia-Georgia conflict over



the breakaway provinces, the Chinese military buildup and China-Taiwan tensions, Turkish-Greek tensions over Cyprus and islands in the Aegean, conflicting oil exploitation plans for the Caspian region, Darfur and/or a new flare-up of bloodletting in Rwanda, and the Chavez-Castro axis.

The polyarchic characteristics of world politics make it very unlikely that NATO, any more than the UN, will be able to conduct actual military operations effectively other than on a modular basis—that is, with small subsets of its membership. Also, the prospect of EU members of NATO (as contemplated under the Berlin-plus formulation) themselves putting together multinational units for the actual conduct of military operations will be most likely with small subsets of the EU membership. And in the EU, as well as NATO, the makeup of these multilateral modules are likely to vary from situation to situation.

The principal conclusion to be drawn from the recognition that polyarchy, and not unipolarity, has become the emergent geopolitical reality is that the *bargaining costs*—the political capital, and sometimes the economic capital, the United States must expend to gain and sustain multilateral cooperation—are rising. *Query*: What is happening to the *military value* of multilateralism?

## THE IMPACT OF MILITARY TRANSFORMATION

A principal strategic consequence of the emergent global polyarchy—the need to be able to use force on behalf of U.S. interests without having to depend on the cooperation of allies—puts a premium on military capabilities that can be used unilaterally. This dynamic channels the stream of military innovation in the direction it has been heading anyway due to the so-called revolution in military affairs (RMA)—a.k.a., *transformation*. The resulting development of unilaterally usable military capabilities confirms fears on all sides that the cement of alliance solidarity is crumbling. Even with respect to NATO, the most integrated of the multilateral security communities, the United States and its allies, although pledged to regard an attack on any one of them as an attack on all, anticipate that member governments (especially given NATO's enlargement) often will have very different views of the stakes. Accordingly, the

United States and its militarily significant coalition partners—most visibly the West European members of NATO—are each developing modular capabilities and contingency plans for opting in or out of the sub-coalitions that might be willing to go to war.

What is strongly given by the basic political and economic trends at the start of the 21st century—that the United States can no longer look forward to a world made up of relatively permanent allies and adversaries—is becoming geostrategically acceptable because of the trends in military capability now maturing. Moreover, this prognosis for looser and less dependable alliances reinforces the arguments of RMA proponents that the unilaterally-usable capabilities becoming feasible are imperative to incorporate into the country's military arsenal.

The awareness in foreign capitals that the United States is preparing to accommodate to the trends in military technology that can reduce the salience of alliances only deepens tensions between Washington and other capitals over the unilateralist trend in U. S. diplomacy across the board, which, in turn, intensifies that trend. If it is no longer a *vital* security interest of the United States to maintain allies around the globe, then even existing U.S. alliance commitments suffer some loss in credibility, as do the commitments on the part of our alliance partners to stand by the United States when we need them. And if the future dependability of allies, for forward bases, overflight rights, close coordination of intelligence, and coalition combat operations, is thereby further reduced, the incentives for acquiring the military wherewithal to go it alone are all the greater.

### **Privileging Flexibility.**

The tangible military benefits of multilateralism—reliable allies who will provide forward bases for U.S. troops, airplanes, ships, and other military resources, and who, at a minimum, will permit U.S. forces to traverse their airspace and territorial waters in wartime—continue to be important. But some of the effects of the RMA are reducing the need to count on such allied cooperation. Indeed, the call for military capabilities that are *alliance-insensitive* (though they are never publicly called that) has been standard fare in the Pentagon's transformation program. Typically, the 2001 *Quadrennial*

*Defense Review* called for “the capability to send well-armed and logistically-supported forces to critical points around the globe, even . . . to locations where the support infrastructure is lacking or has collapsed” — code words for we may not have supportive allies in the locale of a crucial military operation, but we need to be able to get there and fight nonetheless.<sup>26</sup>

Fortuitously, from the standpoint of the perceived need for alliance-insensitive capabilities, U.S. forces that can function effectively with or without the cooperation of foreign governments or multilateral organizations have been materializing anyway as a result of the basic directions of military-technological innovation. Yes, much of the new technology, particularly in the information field, is conducive to multilateral interoperability of countries’ assets and also to wide and deeply-integrated coordination of military activities among allies, in the sharing of information and the command and control of military movements and combat operations. But it also permits a high degree of *modular separability*. Not only can different sets of countries quickly activate a multinational operation. National components, individually or in special subcoalitions, can disengage from the larger multinational information and command system, either to stay out of a conflict or to fight on their own, without paralyzing the multinational system.

The technology-driven developments, plus the strategic requirement for such operational flexibility, are transforming the existing U.S. alliance-oriented force posture into one that can fight with very few allies, or ultimately even without allies where necessary. As the U.S. posture becomes progressively alliance-insensitive, there will be less need of allied concurrence before undertaking major military moves. This will free U.S. military commanders (including the Commander-in-Chief) to pursue flexibly whatever strategies they deem to be most cost-effective as calculated in terms of U.S. resources and interests. It will also make it easier for the United States to resort to force unilaterally or to threaten to do so as a bargaining chip in diplomacy.

A prominent expression of the alliance-free force posture that is materializing is the increasing reliance on sea-based (as opposed to land-based) airpower in situations where forward basing is required for diplomatic pressure or projecting U.S. striking power into another

country. Aircraft carriers, although increasingly vulnerable to shore-based cruise missile attack, usually can deploy close enough to target areas while remaining in international waters and can stay seaborne for extended periods without drydock servicing. Meanwhile, the range and accuracy of both ship-launched and air-launched cruise missiles is increasing, developments that also reduce the need to obtain overflight rights from countries en route to the target sites. As the U.S. Navy likes to put it,

. . . with increasing overflight limitations and continuing reductions in overseas basing rights, only naval forces can maintain assured access to most regions of the world. Naval forces are powerful instruments of national policy because of the self-sufficiency and freedom from host-national political constraints.<sup>27</sup>

Or as the Chief of Naval Operations advertised in his July 2005 congressional testimony, the Navy can bring “persistent and long-range power projection into the fight without a permission slip.”<sup>28</sup>

Although much of the technology for mid-course and terminal guidance of the new missile-delivered ordinance will be sea-based, much of it also will have to be airborne or space-deployed. Recognizing this, and anxious to retain its primacy in future-oriented force planning, Project Air Force at the RAND Corporation has since the late 1980s been urging that,

the U.S. Air Force should . . . seek to exploit the reach of air power to minimize the numbers of people and machines it must move into the forward area and into the range of enemy capabilities. . . .

. . . . .

Assets capable of striking hard across the globe. . . . will be at a premium, while “short-legged” platforms, or systems dependent on platforms based in the theatre, may find limited use.<sup>29</sup>

Anticipating the need to rapidly deploy and sustain *ground forces* into areas where, because of the lack of long-standing U.S. allies, developed ports and large airfields would be unavailable, the Defense Department’s “Transformation Study” called for new efforts to develop the country’s high speed sealift and ultra-heavy airlift capacity, plus innovative platforms for en-route refueling.<sup>30</sup> The contemplated transformation in U.S. capabilities and strategy is

in the direction of less dependence on forward long-term stationing of forces abroad and more on being able to get into zones of combat quickly whether or not allies are around to help or support the required military operations.

The “Global Posture Review” announcements starting in August 2004 of planned realignments and redeployments of the U.S. forces based overseas have been fully consistent with the fundamental move toward an alliance-insensitive grand strategy. “We have developed a set of new concepts,” the Secretary of Defense told the Senate Armed Services Committee:

to govern the way we align ourselves in the coming years and decades. A first notion is that our troops should be located in places where they are wanted, welcomed, and needed. And in some cases, the presence and activities of our forces grate on local populations and have become an irritant for host governments. . . .

....

A second governing concept is that the American troops should be located in environments that are hospitable to their movements. . . . [W]e need to be able to deploy them to trouble spots quickly. Yet over time, some host countries and their neighbors have imposed restrictions on the movement and use of our forces. So it makes sense to place a premium on developing more flexible legal and support arrangements with our allies and partners where we might choose to locate, deploy, or exercise our troops.

Many of our current legal arrangements date back a century or more. We need our international arrangements . . . to reflect the new realities and to permit operational flexibility. They have to help, not hinder, the rapid deployment and employment of U.S. and coalition forces worldwide in a crisis.

Third, we need to be in places that allow our troops to be usable and flexible.

....

Finally, we believe we should take advantage of advanced capabilities that allow us to do more with less. The old reliance on presence and mass reflects the last century’s industrial-age thinking.<sup>31</sup>

The implementation of these flexibility objectives, explained the Secretary, did not mean a wholesale dismantling of America’s main operating bases in Germany, Italy, the UK, Japan, and Korea, but

their “consolidation.” Flexibility also would require, though, gaining access to a broader range of facilities with little or no permanent U.S. presence. In the Middle East, this would mean maintaining what he described as “‘warm’ facilities for rotational forces and contingency purposes.” And in Africa and the Western hemisphere, “we envision a diverse array of smaller cooperative security locations for contingency access.”<sup>32</sup>

The objective, clearly, is to maintain the capacity to project U.S. military power to any trouble spot on the globe, but *not to be dependent on any particular ally or set of allies* in order to do so effectively. And the President and Secretary of Defense have mandated the armed services to incorporate technologies, develop strategies, and negotiate basing arrangements that will allow this objective to be realized.

### **Avoiding Multilateral Drag.**

Despite repeated official reaffirmations of the crucial role alliances play in U.S. national security policy, and NATO’s invocation of the treaty’s Article V solidarity commitment in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, when it comes to actually organizing a military operation in which the United States, and not just its coalition partners, must be constrained by multilateral obligations, Washington balks. Given the uneven capacity of allies to incorporate the fruits of the RMA and the resulting transformation deficits for joint operations with the United States, it should be no surprise that the United States has been more willing to talk the talk than to walk the walk.

The rapid decisionmaking that is required between the time of acquiring crucial information on enemy targets and the need to attack them can turn coalition coordination arrangements into strategic and tactical liabilities. This encumbrance, which became evident during the Kosovo War, was one of the reasons the American military refused some of the offers from NATO allies to participate in the military campaign in Afghanistan. In that conflict, too, the American military came to realize that its objectives could be achieved more efficiently with long-range bombers and transports than with equipment that required nearby basing and overflight arrangements, which often included constraints on U.S. combat operations. “The chief lesson of

Afghanistan, for America,” opined *The Economist*, “is that it can fight its wars by itself.”<sup>33</sup>

In both the Afghanistan war and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, the United States accepted military contributions from coalition members mainly out of considerations of enhancing the political legitimacy of these wars rather than because of the military necessity of such contributions. Although in the aftermath of the prime military-assault phase of each of these conflicts, the United States military has been quite willing to share the burdens of pacification and reconstruction—and even, to some extent, counterinsurgency tasks—with foreign militaries and multilateral organizations.

*The NATO Response Force (NRF)*. Such problematic impacts of military transformation on multilateralism are reflected in hopes and worries about the NATO Response Force, approved by the Ministers of Defense in Brussels in June 2003 and inaugurated with an initial rotation of 9,500 troops in October 2003. Hailed by U.S. and NATO officials as the “center,” “heart,” and “driving engine” of NATO transformation, the NRF as it becomes fully operational (scheduled for October 2006) will number some 25,000 troops, combining land, sea, air, and special forces of the member nations. The NRF is not only to be rapidly deployable (ready to leave for destination X within 5 days of decision day), but also be able to sustain itself without external support for a whole month. The planned package comprises a brigade-size land component with forcible entry capability; a naval task force composed of one carrier battle group, an amphibious task group, and a surface action group; an air component capable of 200 combat sorties a day; and special forces that can be called upon when necessary. Upon a decision to deploy, member countries must transfer the command authority immediately for their NRF-committed forces to SACEUR.

As envisioned by Secretary Rumsfeld, the NRF is not to be simply a special add-on to NATO’s capabilities, but rather the catalyst of a fundamental transformation of the Alliance’s military. Sharing this vision, SACEUR General James Jones forecasts that, “NATO will no longer have the large, massed units that were necessary for the Cold War, but will have agile and capable forces at Graduated Readiness levels that will better prepare the Alliance to meet any threat that it

is likely to face in this 21st century.”<sup>34</sup> According to NATO’s public briefings, the NRF is designed to carry out a range of different missions, “*anywhere in the world*” including:

- deploy as a stand-alone force for NATO treaty Article 5 (collective defense) or non-Article 5 crisis response operations such as evacuation operations, support disaster consequence management (including chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear events), humanitarian crisis situations and counter terrorism operations;
- deploy as an initial entry force facilitating the arrival of larger follow-up forces;
- deploy as a demonstrative force to show NATO’s determination and solidarity to deter crises, and quick response operations to support diplomacy as required.<sup>35</sup>

However, the scheme has two inherent problems. First, as NATO comes to *depend* on the multinational, but integrated, NRF to initiate virtually all of its military missions, the Alliance risks having paltry little to commit at moments of truth, since any decision to deploy the NRF still must be made at the level of the North Atlantic Council, where the consensus rule applies. When the Council is paralyzed by its divisions or is sluggish in resolving them, more “modular” responses (such as proposed later in this monograph) may be cumbersome to put together ad hoc; and members may not even be able to act unilaterally, not having other appropriate national contingents of their own in-being and ready to deploy.

Second, when members, anxious to present a posture of unity to the world, do forge a consensus decision to deploy the NRF despite seriously divergent national interests, unresolved disagreements that can degrade operational effectiveness in the field severely may be passed down to SACUER and his subordinate commanders in the form of national *caveats* (special reservations) to the deployment mandate. The caveat problem has come to haunt even the staunchest champions of the NRF. Secretary Rumsfeld, for one, has been candid about the difficulties:

Put yourself in the position of a battlefield commander with a NATO force of 12 countries under him. If you’ve got six different sets of rules and they’re not allowed to leave a certain area, or they can only fire in self defense in an engagement, or they can only be located in certain places or



they can only perform certain kinds of functions—humanitarian functions as opposed to military functions. Trying to manage a force like that with all those different countries and to get them arranged so that you can do what you need to do. . . . That’s a problem. You can’t do your business that way.<sup>36</sup>

Even so, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer is enthusiastic about the prospects: “When circumstances demand that we use the NRF, we will know it. And we should not hesitate, in those circumstances, to do so.”<sup>37</sup>

*NATO combat troops in Afghanistan?* At the time of this writing a test case for the NRF is looming as NATO prepares to expand its operation in Afghanistan beyond the 10,000 troops still engaged in reconstruction and stabilization tasks in Kabul and in the relatively peaceful north and west of the country. The NATO Council, the Secretary General, and SACEUR visited Afghanistan in the fall of 2005 to assess NATO’s capability for taking over some of the counterinsurgency operations now performed largely by the United States in the turbulent south. Although strongly urged by the United States, the details for implementing the NAC’s authorization to increase NATO troops to 17,000 in 2006, under the assumption that they may well have to engage in active combat, remain contentious among Council members.<sup>38</sup> As expected, some of the countries planning to contribute troops have been attaching caveats to their participation. Again, Rumsfeld himself, talking about plans for the force, highlights the predicament: “Clearly if you’re a NATO commander in an area of operations and there are different rules of engagement, different restrictions on national forces, it makes it enormously difficult for the commander to have the flexibility to function.”<sup>39</sup>

The only way to avoid this problem is to ensure that the troops that are put under the NATO commander are only from those countries willing to agree in advance to either: (a) directives to the NATO commander specific enough to allow him to conduct his mission effectively, or (b) a mission mandate to the NATO commander that, while general in its directives, devolves sufficient authority on to the commander to make all necessary implementing decisions on his own. This means, however, that those cases where the NATO Council may be able to achieve consensus that military action under

the NATO flag is warranted, it should be willing to devolve the authority for political-military direction of the operation to a lead country or set of countries willing to provide the kind of instructions to the designated NATO commander that will allow him to operate with sufficient flexibility and command over his multinational operation to carry out his mission effectively.<sup>40</sup>

## CONCLUSION: TOWARD A MODULAR MULTILATERALISM

### Findings.

1. Despite repeated official reaffirmations of the crucial role alliances play in U.S. national security policy and NATO's invocation of the treaty's Article V solidarity commitment in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, U.S. national security policy must operate in a world of weakening alliances.

2. The fashionable concept of unipolarity does not comprehend adequately the emergent global system in which the United States must pursue its interests. A system is hardly unipolar where very few countries, large or small, gravitate toward (or "bandwagon" with) the dominant power. Instead, the system is characterized increasingly by other powers balking at U.S. demands. Even in America's primary alliance, NATO, the United States is finding it very difficult to generate a consensus—for example, in support of its preferred command and control specifications for the new NATO Reaction Force, or when it wants the Alliance to take a tough stand (say, against Iran).

3. Nor does the classical concept of multipolarity (an international system of competitive great powers) adequately comprehend what is going on. In the multipolar world, the great powers characteristically view one another as rivals for ascendancy, and coalesce into alliances to "balance" the power of a would-be system hegemon. Today, however, other major powers—China, Russia, France, Germany, Britain, the EU, Japan, India, and Brazil—may often oppose or balk at what the United States wants. They may unilaterally, or in fluctuating combinations, refuse to follow Washington's lead; but they show no signs of *combining in an alliance against* the United States.<sup>41</sup>

4. Both the widespread balking at U.S. claims to automatic leadership and the lack of a coherent and sustainable coalition against the United States are symptomatic of a systemic change in world politics—from Cold War bipolarity to post-Cold War *polyarchy*. Polyarchy—the emergent global system—is characterized by a myriad of diverse alignments and adversary relationships in which, typically, a country’s cooperating partner in one field may be its rival or opponent in another field, today’s friend may be tomorrow’s enemy, and vice versa. The actors of significance—that is, those the United States must bargain with or coerce in order to secure its interests—are not only the major powers, but are also lesser states, nonstate political or religio-cultural movements, wealthy multinational corporations, consortia, cartels, and transnational industry associations. Moreover, the bargaining as often as not, will take place in multilateral forums (some with memberships and voting rules favoring the United States, some with voting rules that do not), in which a shifting kaleidoscope of coalitions form and reform, depending on the issue at hand.

5. Thus far, the main U.S. responses to its declining ability to mobilize NATO behind its security policies and actions and to call the shots in other multilateral forums, have been largely maladaptive: unilateralism or denial.

6. When it comes to using force, the unilateral—go-it-alone—response has been facilitated by the so-called RMA, a.k.a. “transformation.” The relevant transformation developments include major improvements in delivering ordnance accurately over long distances; rapidly transporting heavy equipment and large numbers of personnel into zones of combat; the ability to see the battlefield in detail from space-deployed reconnaissance platforms; and the ability to direct military operations from remote headquarters. All of these reduce the need to pre-position military forces on land, maintain bases, or even obtain over-flight rights close to prospective locales of belligerency. These developments translate into a more alliance-insensitive force posture.

7. The awareness in foreign capitals that the United States is developing a more alliance-insensitive force posture deepens tensions between Washington and other capitals over the unilateralist trend in U.S. diplomacy, reducing in turn the commitments of allies to

stand by the United States when this country needs them. And as the future dependability of allies for forward bases, overflight rights, close coordination of intelligence, or, more ambitiously, multinational combat operations, is placed in doubt, the incentives for acquiring the military wherewithal to go it alone are all the greater.

8. The denial response involves a refusal to admit that, for most allies of the United States, the world has changed in the polyarchic direction, and that their unwillingness to “bandwagon” with Washington on many issues is a perfectly understandable posture. The consequence of such denial in Washington of the new global realities is frustration at the virtual paralysis of NATO decision and command procedures premised on consensus in the Council and on disciplined unity down the multinational chain of command.<sup>42</sup>

9. The U.S. fall-back response to the divisions within NATO has been to put together – on an ad hoc basis – “coalitions of the willing.” But if constructed in a mood of frustration at other members of the transatlantic community, as happened in 2002-03, in contrast to the respectful courtship of allies and supporters (members and nonmembers of NATO) prior to the 1991 Gulf War, such demarches will appear to be little more than disguised unilateralism, and the recruited coalition partners risk being branded a coalition of the pliant.

10. The basic European responses to the emergent polyarchy have, for the most part, been more adept than the U.S. responses. Through the mechanism of agreements negotiated between the EU Secretary General and the NATO Secretary General, the Europeans have obtained NATO acquiesce to the principle of “*autonomous action*” by EU military forces and also to the right, under the so-called Berlin Plus” accords, to access to NATO facilities and equipment on a case-by-case basis for operations in which the EU, but not NATO, would be engaged. Moreover, the EU has been elaborating such intra-European modular arrangements within its own ESDP that allow access to common EU capabilities to subgroups of EU countries who are capable and willing of mounting military operations consistent with EU purposes.

## Recommendations.

A central desideratum in U.S. national security policy should be to retain the tangible and legitimacy benefits of transatlantic multilateralism while minimizing its constraints on the effective use of force. *These sometimes competing objectives will require the following normative, organizational, and procedural adaptations in NATO and in U.S.-NATO and U.S.-EU relations:*

- The United States should recognize – in both declaratory policy and actions – that the amorphous transatlantic community, and its expression in an enlarged NATO, has evolved into a coalition of coalitions and a much looser association of member states than originally assumed in the Washington Treaty.
- All-for-one and one-for all Article 5 responses to military (or terrorist) attacks should still be sought, but they should not be touted as the hallmark of the organization. Just as NATO has been able to embrace new post-Cold War missions, it should be able to adapt to the increasing divergence of its members' security interests by legitimating and elaborating modular structures, decision processes, and operational routines.
- Given the difficulty, in the polyarchic world system, of arriving at a consensus when it comes to providing operational directives to NATO's military bodies, the Council should be expected to exercise its role as a consultative institution more than its role as director of NATO military actions. As a "permanently-sitting" summit of the highest national security officials of member governments (or their high-level representatives) the Council's quintessential functions should be: resolving disputes among members; formulating broad *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* principles; and shaping common approaches to other shared problems, such as how to deal with civil wars, terrorism, and the proliferation of WMD.
- The Council's role with respect to NATO military actions – whether sitting at the heads-of state level, the foreign ministers level, or the defense ministers level – would be primarily as an overseer of contemplated and on-going actions conducted in the name of NATO to ensure that they were not inconsistent

with the use-of-force principles around which the transatlantic community had been able to form a consensus. Moreover, the Council should refrain from “passing the buck” to the Defense Planning Group, the Secretary General, SACEUR, or the Military Committee in the form of excessively-vague mandates for putting together and directing a NATO military operation (that subsequently might put the Secretary General and SACEUR in conflict with national or sub-coalition governments or commanders in the field).<sup>43</sup>

- In situations when the Council is unable to achieve a consensus directing SACEUR to activate the NRF or other all-NATO military units in response to a threat that some members define as sufficiently serious to warrant military action, the Council should be prepared (but not obliged) to devolve considerable political authority and direction of military operations to subgroups of member countries who *are* ready to respond.<sup>44</sup> A case-by-case devolution of authority to sub-coalitions, and deference to their relative operational autonomy, should be positively endorsed as consistent with, not an exceptional deviation from, NATO norms.<sup>45</sup>
- In order to enhance the ability of NATO commanders in future contingencies to perform their missions flexibly and more efficiently, and to reduce the drag on their operations from technologically deficient and otherwise relatively incapable national military units and from individual-country caveats, more modular modes of putting together and conducting NATO military operations should be adopted.

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To sum up: The U.S. grand strategy for conducting the war on terrorism, countering the proliferation of WMD, and tending to other security threats as they arise should retain the multilateralist premise that in the increasingly interdependent world of the 21st century the resort to coercive diplomacy or military force requires the widest possible international authorization and cooperation. But requiring the widest possible support does not mean precluding

essential action in the absence of timely authorization by the preferred multilateral organizations: the UN and/or NATO. Consistent with Article 51 of the UN Charter (permitting individual and collective self-defense when the Security Council is unable to act), the United States can protect its important security interests and retrieve the otherwise declining legitimacy of its foreign policy by adopting a *modular* approach to collective action in the security field.

The modular approach (involving more than ad hoc “coalitions of the willing”) should be designed to work proactively to institutionalize and legitimize a flexible array of political structures, communication systems, military command and control procedures, and weapon system interoperability arrangements, to facilitate collaboration among the different subsets of actors capable and willing to deal with future security threats. *The overall system should have sufficient modularity at various levels to allow particular groupings of countries to cooperate – or refuse to cooperate – in using force, but without negating the integrity and importance of the multilateral ethos.* Authorization from the UN Security Council and/or the NATO Council should be sought to maximize the legitimacy and burden-sharing benefits of multilateralism. When political differences among their members preclude timely UN or NATO endorsement of a military operation the United States has deemed to be in its security interests, authorization and support from the widest multilateral groupings possible should still be sought. The actual conduct of military operations, however, should always be confined to those modular units that can operate with sufficient unity of command and control – minus debilitating national caveats – to efficiently achieve the U.S. military objectives.

## ENDNOTES

1. John Ruggie’s definition of multilateralism as “an institutional form that coordinates relations among three or more states on the basis of generalized principles of conduct” is consistent with my use of the term, although I do not restrict multilateralism to *institutional* forms. Multilateral accountability interactions can also take place on a much thinner and/or temporary basis than that which (in common discourse) would be regarded as an institutional form. Thus, I regard the extent of institutionalization (which could even be zero) as a variable dimension of multilateralism. See John Gerard Ruggie, “Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution,” *Multilateralism Matters: The Theory and Praxis of an Institutional Form*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1993, pp. 3-47.

2. Many bilateral treaties also contain the kind of mutual accountability that would qualify a three-or-more party arrangement as multilateral. The SALT and START treaties between the United States and the Soviet Union are prominent examples. The multilateral category, however, goes beyond such bilateral one-to-one commitments, in that it implies a wider international community to whom the parties must be accountable than only each other.

3. See Ruth W. Grant and Robert O. Keohane, "Accountability and the Abuses of Power in World Politics," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 99, No. 1, February 2005, pp. 29-43, for a comprehensive conceptual analysis of contemporary problems of international accountability encompassing economic, environmental, and humanitarian issues, as well as international peace and security issues. For an earlier analysis, see Seyom Brown, *New Forces, Old Forces, and the Future of World Politics*, New York: Longman, 1995, pp. 191-194, 255-267.

4. In the 1990-91 Gulf War, the administration of George H. W. Bush had also deemed it diplomatically and militarily more efficient to bypass NATO and to conduct Operation DESERT STORM with a Washington-constructed and directed "coalition of the willing" under a very general UN Security Council mandate.

5. Presidential Decision Directive 25, Washington, DC: The White House, 1994.

6. Richard C. Eichenberg, "Victory Has Many Friends: U.S. Public Opinion and the Use of Military Force, 1981-2005," *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 1, Summer 2005, pp. 140-177.

7. President William J. Clinton, *A National Security Strategy for a New Century*, Washington, DC: The White House, December 1999.

8. On the Bosnia peacekeeping coordination problems, see Ivo Daalder, *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy*, Washington, DC: Brookings, 2000. For the disputes over targeting in the Kosovo War, see General Wesley K. Clark, *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Future of Conflict*, New York: Public Affairs, 2001.

9. The United States sought and obtained UN Security Council authorization in the summer of 1950 for conducting the war in Korea, which was called a UN Police Action, since the Soviet Union had temporarily abandoned its Security Council seat and could not cast a veto. When the Soviets returned to the Council in the fall, the United States sought and obtained authorization from the General Assembly, in which the United States could still mobilize a majority, for crossing the 38th parallel and establishing conditions in the North conducive to the peaceful reunification of Korea.

10. Even most of the professedly "nonaligned" countries tilted rather obviously to one side or the other during most of the Cold War: e.g., Egypt toward the Soviet Union, Mexico toward the United States. India, widely regarded as the leader of the nonaligned movement though never really taking orders from Moscow, also tended to take the Kremlin's side in many Cold War disputes.



11. In the academic literature on international systems, there is no agreed-upon definition of the “polar” suffix. Thus, Kenneth Waltz in his *Theory of International Politics*, Reading, MA: Addison Wesley, 1979, pp. 161-193, uses it simply to designate the *number* of powerful states in a system, whereas Raymond Aron in his *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*, New York: Praeger, 1966, pp. 125-149, compares systems divided into two camps (bipolar) with systems with numerous power centers (multipolar), some of which may operate as coalitions, and some of which may be states standing apart from any coalitions. Standard contemporary textbooks reflect the confusion. For example, Joshua Goldstein’s *International Relations*, New York: Longman, 2003, p. 98-99, says that “In a multipolar system there are typically five or six centers of power, which are not grouped into alliances. Each state participates independently and on relatively equal terms with the others. . . . A bipolar system has two predominant states or two great rival alliances. . . . [A] unipolar system has a single center of power around which all others revolve.”

12. An early and widely-cited expression of the unipolar thesis was Charles Krauthammer, “The Unipolar Moment,” *Foreign Affairs: America and the World 1990/91*, special issue, Vol 70, No. 1. See also Michael Mastanduno, “Preserving the Unipolar Moment: Realist Theories and Grand Strategy After the Cold War,” *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 4, Spring 1977, pp. 49-98.

13. Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, “American Primacy in Perspective,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 4, July/August 2002. Despite the strain on U.S. military resources in Afghanistan and Iraq, the overwhelming U.S. military superiority remains dramatic and unprecedented.

14. For examples, see Stephen Walt, *Taming American Power: The Global Response to U.S. Primacy*, New York: Norton, 2005. See also Seyom Brown, *The Illusion of Control: Force and Foreign Policy in the 21st Century*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2003.

15. For additional discussion of how the characteristics and role of hegemonic powers affect the prospects for peace and war, see Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in International Politics*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1981; Stephen Krasner, “State and Power and the Structure of International Trade,” *World Politics*, Vol. 28, No. 3, April 1976; and Timothy McKeown, “Hegemonic Stability Theory and 19th Century Tariff Levels in Europe,” *International Organization*, Winter 1983.

16. John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of the Great Powers*, New York: Norton, 2001.

17. For discussion of China’s power, ambitions, and problems, see Evan S. Medeiros and M. Taylor Fravel, “China’s New Diplomacy,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 6, November/December 2003, pp. 22-35. See also Thomas Christensen, “Posing Problems Without Catching Up: China’s Rise and Challenges for U.S. Security Policy,” *International Security*, Vol. 25, No. 4, Spring 2001, pp. 5-40.

18. For analysis of Japanese interests and capabilities, see, for example, Eric Heginbotham and Richard Samuels, "Japan's Dual Hedge," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 81, No. 5, September-October 2002. An assessment of the prospects for a more assertive, even militarized Japanese diplomacy in reaction to what I call "polyarchy" appears in Eugene Matthews, "Japan's New Nationalism," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 6, November-December 2003, pp. 74-90.

19. Seyom Brown, *New Forces, Old Forces, and the Future of World Politics*, New York: HarperCollins, 1995.

20. *Polyarchy* (a term coined by political scientist Robert A. Dahl to describe patterns of participation and opposition in domestic politics) is used here to denote a pattern of *international* relationships featuring many different kinds of actors—governmental and nongovernmental—characterized by a wide diversity of alignments and adversary relationships, subject to change issue-by-issue and lacking a dominant axis of cooperation and conflict. For Dahl's original usage, see his *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971. I first began to use the term to describe a possible post-Cold War international system in my *New Forces in World Politics*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1974.

21. Cross pressures on and within the NATO did, of course, exist during the Cold War—most dramatically in the 1956 British-French-Israeli military assault on Egypt, surprising and angering the Eisenhower administration, followed by France acquiring its own nuclear arsenal and withdrawing from NATO's military structure. But such fallings out were regarded as highly irregular and inconsistent with the imperative of maintaining unity against the common enemy and were, for the most part, diplomatically intercepted by the United States and squelched before any such public rupture.

22. Robert E. Hunter, the U.S. Ambassador to NATO at the time, provides insight into Washington's alarmist reactions to St. Malo in his book, *The European Security and Defense Community: NATO's Companion or Competitor*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2002, pp. 29-44.

23. Quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 33-34. Emphasis added by Ambassador Hunter.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 34-44.

25. Various NATO papers on the "Framework Agreement" (including the background paper, "EU-NATO: The Framework for Permanent Relations and Berlin Plus," n.d.); and the NATO Topics paper, "NATO-EU: A Strategic Partnership: How Did the Policy Evolve?" dated December 2, 2004.

26. *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, Washington, DC: Department of Defense, September 30, 2001, p. 43. The need to adapt to the new reality of less reliable allies was forecast in 2000 by the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century report, *New World Coming*, pp. 56-57:

The permanent stationing of U.S. forces abroad will become more difficult to sustain. The political cost of such bases will likely rise, as

will the vulnerability of such forces to attack with ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction. The latter circumstance may erode support for such bases from the home front. Taken together, the pressures against the permanent forward basing of U.S. military forces have profound implications for U.S. strategy, power projection capabilities, and alliance relationships.

27. Department of the Navy, *1999 Posture Statement: America's 21st Century Force*, Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 1999. For an independent assessment of the implications of future problematical base availability for Navy force planning, see Owen R. Cote, Jr., "Buying '... From the Sea': A Defense Budget for a Maritime Strategy," in Cindy Williams, ed., *Holding the Line: U.S. Defense Alternatives for the Early 21st Century*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001, pp. 141-179.

28. Testimony of Chief Naval Officer Vern Clark before the Power Projection Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, July 15, 2005. Available at [www.navy.mil](http://www.navy.mil).

29. Zalmay Khalilzad and Ian O. Lesser, "Conclusions and Implications for the U.S. Airforce of 2025," in their edited volume, *Sources of Conflict in the 21st Century: Regional Futures and U.S. Strategy*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1988, p. 310.

30. *Transformation Study Report: Transforming Military Operational Capabilities*, Washington, DC: Department of Defense, April 27, 2001.

31. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, Testimony, Senate Arms Services Committee, September 23, 2004. Available at [www.defenselink.mil/speeches](http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches).

32. *Ibid.*

33. "Who Needs Whom?" *Economist*, March 9, 2002, pp. 30-31.

34. SACEUR quote from NATO background paper, "The NATO Response Force: How did it evolve?" available at [www.nato.int/issues/nrf/nrf](http://www.nato.int/issues/nrf/nrf), September 19, 2005.

35. NATO background paper, "The NATO Response Force: At the center of NATO transformation," available at [www.nato.int/issues/nrf/nrf](http://www.nato.int/issues/nrf/nrf), September 19, 2005.

36. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, remarks to media en route to Berlin, September 12, 2005. Available at [www.defenselink.mil/transcripts](http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts).

37. NATO background paper, "The NATO Response Force: What does this mean in practice?" September 19, 2005, available at [www/nato.int/issues/nrf](http://www/nato.int/issues/nrf).

38. Carlotta Gall, "NATO to Expand Force and Task in Afghanistan," *New York Times*, October 7, 2005.

39. Rumsfeld to media, September 12, 2005.

40. An appropriate model can be borrowed from Operation DESERT STORM in the 1991 Gulf War, which was run under a UN Security Council mandate allowing all necessary means, including military, to oust Saddam's forces from Kuwait, but

left it up to the member countries to implement the mandate, meaning in that case, the United States and the coalition of the willing it could assemble to follow the U.S. lead. President Bush, at the time, wisely rejected the recommendation from Mikail Gorbachev to lodge responsibility for political direction of the war in the UN Security Council and Secretary General.

41. See Stephen Walt, *Taming American Power: The Global Response to U.S. Primacy*, New York: Norton, 2005. Even so-called “soft-balancing” — involving nonmilitary counters to the hegemon — has not manifested anything like a coherent anti-U.S. basis for putting together and sustaining a coalition. See *International Security*, Vol. 30, No. 1, Summer 2005, for a scholarly debate over this concept.

42. See Secretary Rumsfeld’s vocal complaints (quoted above) against national “caveats.”

43. Such mandates to form a consensus when one does not exist (except in the most vague terms) can be a source of “caveat” problems where national military authorities attach their own interpretations and restrictions onto a presumably agreed-upon NATO plan, making for subsequent difficulties in coordinating operations.

44. There was some sense after all to Secretary Rumsfeld’s frequently reiterated (and frequently criticized) dictum that “the mission determines the coalition, and the coalition must not determine the mission.” DoD News Briefing by Secretary Rumsfeld, *U.S. Department of Defense News Transcript*, Washington, DC: The Pentagon, October 18, 2001.

45. This kind of modularity (that perhaps can serve as a model for NATO’s own such devolutionary processes) is being instituted *within* the EU with respect to the formation and deployment of Rapid Response Battlegroups. See ESDP Presidency Report, endorsed by the European Council on December 17, 2004, available at [www.europa.eu.int/pol/cfsp](http://www.europa.eu.int/pol/cfsp).